

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 4, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 17-20 and 37-40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Yount (US 4,622,667). The Examiner acknowledged, however, that claims 21-23 and 41-43 would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of their respective base and intermediate claims. Applicants express appreciation to the Examiner for acknowledging the presence of allowable subject matter, and respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 17 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 21 (and intervening claims 18-20). Claims 18-21 have been canceled, and claims 22 and 23 have been amended to depend from claim 17. Accordingly, claims 17 and 22-23 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 37 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 41 (and intervening claims 38-40). Claims 38-41 have been canceled, and claims 42 and 43 have been amended to depend from claim 37. Accordingly, claims 37 and 42-43 are now in condition for allowance.

New claim 46 has been added which contains all of the limitations of claim 23 which the Examiner acknowledged as being allowable. Claims 47-48 depend from claim 46. Accordingly, claims 46-48 are in condition for allowance.

New claim 49 has been added which contains the limitations of claim 43 which the Examiner acknowledged as being allowable. Claims 50-51 depend from claim 49. Accordingly, claims 49-51 are in condition for allowance.

II. Rejections under 35 USC 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 17-20 and 37-40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Yount (US 4,622,667). Without comment and without prejudice as to the merits of the Examiner's rejections, Applicants have amended claims 17 and 37 in accordance with the Examiner's acknowledgement of allowable subject matter, thereby rendering these rejections moot.

III. New Claims 52-54

New claim 52 recites a method comprising generating synchronous digital control data at a pair of computer systems of one or more redundant pairs of computer systems; sending the generated synchronous digital control data to one or more line replaceable units; converting at least a portion of the digital control data into an analog signal; *checking validity of at least some of the redundant pairs of computer systems, wherein checking the validity includes: determining a freshness invalid signal; and determining if an error condition exists based on the corresponding digital control data and the freshness invalid signal;* and if validity is confirmed, sending the analog signal to a corresponding actuator. (emphasis added).

Claim 52 is not disclosed, taught, or fairly suggested by Yount. More specifically, Yount fails to teach or suggest a method including *checking validity of at least some of the redundant pairs of computer systems, wherein checking the validity includes: determining a freshness invalid signal; and determining if an error condition exists based on the corresponding digital control data and the freshness invalid signal.* Yount teaches monitoring and comparing output signals to detect a discrepancy. (7:5-28). However, the prior art, including Yount, fails to teach or fairly suggest *checking validity of at least some of the redundant pairs of computer systems, wherein checking the validity includes: determining a freshness invalid signal; and determining if an error condition exists based on the corresponding digital control data and the freshness invalid signal* as recited in claim 52. Accordingly, claim 52 is allowable.

Claims 53 and 54 depend from claim 52 and are allowable at least due to their dependency on claim 52, and also due to additional limitations recited in those claims. For example, claim 53 recites the method of claim 52, wherein determining if an error condition exists includes at least one of: if a difference between the digital control data of each computer system of a pair is greater than a threshold value, adding a first constant value to an error value; if the difference between the digital control data from the computer systems of a pair is less than the first threshold value, subtracting a second constant value from the error value; if the error value is greater than a second threshold value, indicating that an error condition exists with respect to the pair of computer systems; and if the error value is at least equal to a third threshold value, indicating that an error condition does not exist. Similarly, claim 54 recites the method of claim 52, further comprising disabling one or more of the redundant pairs of computer systems based on the determining if an error condition exists. These additional limitations are also not taught or fairly suggested by the prior art.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit pending claims 17, 22-23, 37, 42-44, and 46-54 are now in condition for allowance. If there are any remaining matters that may be handled by telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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